



CHAPTER 4

Transition to the Watershed Approach

Creating an Organizational Structure for the Watershed Management Approach

To support its watershed approach, Kentucky will establish organizations to implement the administrative structure outlined in Chapters 2 and 3. This chapter summarizes the key groups and issues involved in making the transition to full implementation of the state's Watershed Management Framework.

Establish a Statewide Steering Committee

In 1996, the Kentucky Watershed Framework Development Workgroup began developing the core components of the statewide Watershed Management Framework. As described in Chapter 2, these core components are:

- Basin management units
- Basin management cycle

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A statewide workgroup began developing the core components of the Kentucky Watershed Management Framework in 1996.

A Statewide Steering Committee is needed to convene the Partner Network and to provide ongoing support for basin and watershed planning and implementation.

The Kentucky Watershed Framework Development Workgroup will provide a starting point for organizing a permanent Steering Committee to provide coordination and oversight.

- Statewide basin management schedule
- Forums to support cooperative action and public participation
- Basin Management and Watershed Action Plans

As part of the development of this Framework Document, the Kentucky Watershed Framework Development Workgroup has addressed the first three of these core components: designating five groups of basin management units, describing key basin management cycle activities, and developing a five-year basin management schedule and activity reference guide. However, key statewide management activities remain to be completed. A Statewide Steering Committee is needed to (1) convene the Partner Network that will support critical public participation and outreach activities, and (2) provide ongoing review and consultation for basin- and watershed-level planning and implementation.

To support these long-term activities, Kentucky will create a permanent Statewide Steering Committee to oversee implementation of the Framework. Critical steps involved in establishing the Steering Committee include

- Developing a charter to define ongoing Steering Committee activities and responsibilities
- Adopting rules of operation to guide future meetings and deliberations, including an approach for selecting a Committee Chairperson
- Reviewing the organizations represented on the existing Workgroup to identify needs for new Steering Committee members
- Finalizing the Framework Document and establishing a method for indicating endorsement by the partner organizations

Steering Committee Charter

In its deliberations, the Kentucky Watershed Framework Development Workgroup recognized the need for statewide coordination of watershed management activities. As the basin management cycle tasks are implemented in each of the five basin management unit groups, multiple activities will be occurring throughout the state by the fifth year of implementation (see Figure 2-6). Because many different organizations will be involved in conducting these tasks, some mechanism is needed to provide coordination and oversight.

The Workgroup was specifically charged with identifying any existing statewide organizations that could fulfill the oversight role. While several groups and organizations in Kentucky address certain aspects of watershed management, the Workgroup concluded that there are no existing statewide organizations that encompass the expertise or mandates to implement all basin management cycle tasks. As a result, the Kentucky Water-

shed Framework Development Workgroup was seen as a starting point for organizing a permanent Steering Committee to provide these coordination and oversight functions.

The Workgroup further concluded that the charter for this Steering Committee should be narrowly focused. The Steering Committee will assist the River Basin Teams and Local Watershed Task Forces by ensuring that appropriate expertise and resources are directed to watershed management efforts. This will be accomplished through Steering Committee review of the membership of River Basin Teams and Local Watershed Task Forces. The Steering Committee members will be expected to offer additional expertise and resources as needed. In this way, the Steering Committee will consult with and support the basinwide and watershed-level forums.

Overall, the Steering Committee will serve as the body to best achieve the objectives described in Kentucky's Watershed Management Mission Statement. In particular, the Steering Committee will

- Increase communication and consensus among state programs and other stakeholder groups
- Review watershed management priorities and targeted management activities
- Coordinate statewide regulatory and non-regulatory program revisions
- Provide a forum for program networking to manage changes in program funding
- Develop strong partnerships with regional, county, and local governments
- Coordinate existing public communication and education forums through the Partner Network

Rules of Operation

The Kentucky Watershed Framework Development Workgroup and its Technical Subcommittees have operated under Rules of Operation adopted in early 1996. These same Rules of Operation will be reviewed and revised by the Steering Committee as needed. The Rules address membership, coordination, decision making, and conflict resolution (see sidebar on the next page).

In addition, the Workgroup recommended that a Steering Committee Chairperson be chosen to provide administrative coordination for Committee activities. The Chair will be chosen by consensus of the whole Committee.

As a first order of business, the steering committee will review the Rules of Operation adopted by the Framework Development Workgroup, and refine them as needed.

Rules of Operation

Rules of Operation will be reviewed and revised by the Steering Committee as needed.

Membership

- In general, Steering Committee members should have statewide or basinwide involvement in natural resource activities
- Ability to bring resources (people, funding, authorities) to the Framework process
- Willingness to participate in a constructive manner
- Ability to make a long-term commitment
- Membership should represent a broad spectrum of agencies, organizations, and non-governmental interests.

Coordination

Kentucky Division of Water will continue to provide the following ongoing coordination functions:

- Maintain mailing lists
- Arrange Steering Committee meetings
- Document Steering Committee sessions
- Distribute Steering Committee materials (agendas, meeting summaries)

Decision Making

Work toward general consensus, which is defined as achieving “solutions with which everyone can live” and not necessarily with which everyone is in complete agreement

Conflict Resolution

Conflicts over issues not central to watershed approach implementation should be settled outside of the Steering Committee process.

Conflicts involving key decisions of the Steering Committee will be addressed by

- Identifying conflicting positions and clarifying the rationale behind them (i.e., interests represented, main issues, and motivations)
- Obtaining additional information as needed to help clarify issues or reduce uncertainties
- Developing alternative strategies that address interests (i.e., search for common ground or compromise)

The Steering Committee will review its membership and invite additional participation if key groups or subject areas have been omitted.

Steering Committee Membership

The Workgroup recommended that Steering Committee membership initially include all groups represented on the Workgroup and Technical Subcommittees. As a first order of business, the Steering Committee will review its membership and invite additional participation if key groups or subject areas have been omitted.

Framework Endorsement

The Workgroup members recommended that some form of endorsement be requested from each of the organizations represented on the Steering Committee to reflect commitment to the Watershed Management Framework. Once the final Framework Document is reviewed by the Workgroup, it should be forwarded to senior management in each agency with an accompanying letter requesting written endorsement.

The Workgroup concluded that such endorsement is needed to ensure commitment to membership in the Steering Committee. As a result, the Workgroup will continue to perform the coordination functions of a Steering Committee, including the creation of a Kentucky River Basin Team, until the Framework Document has been endorsed. It is expected that this Framework Document will be forwarded for endorsement by early summer 1997 and the Steering Committee will convene by midsummer 1997.

Create the Kentucky River Basin Team

The Kentucky River Basin will be the first management unit to initiate the basin management cycle. As a result, a Basin Coordinator must be identified prior to the start of phase I of the Kentucky River management cycle in July 1997. The Statewide Steering Committee will select the Basin Coordinator. The Coordinator will, in turn, consult with each of the partner organizations on the Steering Committee to identify appropriate individuals to serve on the Kentucky River Basin Team.

The Statewide Steering Committee and the River Basin Teams are intended to complement one another. The Steering Committee will ensure that key people are involved on each River Basin Team. This is not an approval process (the Steering Committee will not vote on River Basin Team membership); rather, the Steering Committee will obtain additional resources or expertise to support the Basin Team if needed. In turn, the River Basin Team will implement the basin management cycle activities designed by the Steering Committee. To facilitate its implementation activities, each River Basin Team will need to

- Adopt rules of operation (see sidebar on Rules of Operation on page 4-4)
- Brief River Basin Team members on the Framework and basin management cycle activities
- Begin work on Phase 1 scoping and data gathering activities, including preparing the Basin Status Report and Strategic Data Collection Plan

These same actions will be completed by each of the River Basin Teams as they are convened. The Steering Committee should note that the Basin Teams will benefit from getting an early start on basin management activities, especially as each Team begins the basin management cycle. For this reason, the Steering Committee should begin considering River Basin Team membership three to six months before the basin management cycle begins each July (for the next five years) in a new group

Organizations represented on the Steering Committee will be asked to endorse the Framework to signify their commitment to the watershed approach.

The Kentucky River Basin will be the first management unit to initiate the basin management cycle.

To implement the basin management cycle, each River Basin Team will need to:

- *Adopt Rules of Operation*
- *Brief team members on the Framework and basin management cycle*
- *Begin work on scoping and data gathering activities*

River Basin Teams will benefit from getting an early start on basin management activities.

Public involvement with the River Basin Teams will be critical to successful implementation of the Framework.

Key members of the Partner Network need to be oriented to Framework goals and opportunities.

Guidance to support the development of strategic Monitoring Work Plans is being written.

The guidance will help the River Basin Teams review existing monitoring activities and identify critical gaps.

of basin management units. In this way, the Basin Teams will have an opportunity to get organized before they are scheduled to start producing materials, such as the Basin Status Report.

As described in Chapter 2, public involvement and consultation with the River Basin Teams will be critical to successful implementation of the watershed approach. Consultation with stakeholders and the public will be supported through a Partner Network.

Convene a Partner Network

The Statewide Steering Committee and Public Information Coordinator will support a Partner Network which will assist with the work of the River Basin Teams (see Chapter 2). The Public Information Coordinator will recruit members of the Partner Network and orient them so they have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of the Framework and basin management cycle. The Network members will, in turn, advise the River Basin Teams on the local organizations and individuals who should be actively involved in basin management activities.

The Partner Network is critical to the long-term success of the watershed approach. The partners will identify local organizations and individuals who are needed to carry out local watershed management. Some or all of these key participants are likely to be strong candidates for the Local Watershed Task Forces, which will design and implement priority watershed Action Plans. Without this key link to the public, many critical watershed management activities may not succeed.

Developing Guidance and Implementation Tools

In addition to the organizational and administrative activities needed to implement the Kentucky Watershed Management Framework, certain guidance and implementation tools will also be needed.

Monitoring Guidance

A Technical Workgroup convened in January 1997 to begin work on guidance to support the development of strategic Monitoring Work Plans within each basin management unit. The guidance will help the River Basin Teams review existing monitoring activities and identify critical gaps (see Appendix F for a current inventory of monitoring activities in Kentucky). These gaps may include

- (1) An absence of regular monitoring in major water resources of the state
- (2) Limited monitoring for critical indicators of watershed integrity or stress (e.g., habitat measures or other indicators of biological resource value)

- (3) Limited monitoring for stressors within the watershed (e.g., changes in land use).

The River Basin Teams will develop strategic Monitoring Work Plans to ensure that sufficient data are collected to set watershed management priorities within the basin and target resources in a cost-effective manner. In addition, the Monitoring Guidance will help ensure that the many agencies and programs collecting monitoring data throughout the state follow common data quality and metadata objectives.

The Statewide Steering Committee will continue to support the Monitoring Technical Workgroup. An initial draft of the monitoring guidance will be completed by July 1997.

Prioritization and Targeting Methods

As described in Chapter 3, a subcommittee of the Kentucky Watershed Framework Development Workgroup is developing methods for reaching consensus on the most pressing problems within each basin management unit. An initial draft of a quantitative formula to guide the development of priority rankings for watersheds will be drafted as a separate guidance document. The Steering Committee will continue to gather comments on the draft priority-ranking formula and revise it as needed.

Education and Outreach Materials

As part of the ongoing public outreach and consultation activities built into the basin management cycle, the River Basin Teams and Public Information Coordinator will continue to develop and disseminate education and outreach materials. These materials will include work products generated as part of the basin management cycle activities, such as Basin Status Reports, as well as more general educational materials on watershed management. Many of these materials can be adapted from outreach information produced by other states, federal agencies, or non-profit organizations. A small workgroup is currently inventorying existing outreach materials and identifying important topics to focus on initially. It will be the responsibility of the Steering Committee, River Basin Teams, and Public Information Coordinator to ensure that these materials are tailored to appropriate audiences within Kentucky.

Guidance is being prepared on methods for reaching consensus on priority ranking of watersheds.

Important education topics and existing outreach materials need to be identified.

Each partner involved in watershed management will need to orient day-to-day activities to support the basin management cycle.

Membership in the Steering Committee and River Basin Team includes an obligation to offer resources to support shared watershed management activities.

Aligning Ongoing Program Activities with the Basin Management Cycle

Each partner program involved in watershed management will also be responsible for orienting its day-to-day activities to support aspects of the basin management cycle. This can be accomplished by revising work plans and standard operating procedures and shifting resources within program budgets. Programs should conduct self-audits to identify resources that can be reallocated to support Framework activities. These audits can identify activities that are no longer relevant to the mission of the agency or resources that can be reprogrammed to support watershed management.

In some cases, key basin management cycle activities can be implemented by Framework partners without the need for significant, additional resources. For example, partners can help disseminate Basin Status Reports, pamphlets, and other public outreach materials through existing regional offices and media contacts, or as part of other, ongoing outreach activities.

In addition, those partners who can volunteer additional resources will be asked to support certain fixed costs, such as document printing. Each partner should understand that participation on the Steering Committee and River Basin Teams includes an obligation to identify and offer resources to support shared watershed management activity costs.